

SMaRT Station® Background



Taking care of a community's garbage was once a simple task - pick it up and haul it to the dump. But over the past two decades, Americans have come to realize that our throwaway society wastes resources and increases pollution. Landfills are filling rapidly and it is difficult and expensive to open new ones.

California is leading the nation in recognizing the importance of managing garbage better in order to preserve the life of landfills. State law requires every municipality in California to reduce the amount of refuse going to landfills by 50% by 2000. Sunnyvale is currently diverting 63% of its waste.

Curbside recycling programs introduced and expanded over the past few years were the first step in meeting the challenge of managing the community's solid waste. Every bottle, can, jar, or newspaper that residents pull out of their garbage can and set out for recycling reduces the amount of trash that ends up in the landfill. Yard trimmings make up 20-30% of a typical household's weekly trash, so the addition of yard trimmings recycling significantly decreases the volume of material classified as "garbage."

The Sunnyvale Materials Recovery and Transfer (SMaRT®) Station takes the communities of Mountain View, Palo Alto and Sunnyvale to the next level of efficiency and effectiveness in reducing the amount of garbage going to landfill. The facility, operated by Bay Counties Waste Services for the cities of Mountain View, Palo Alto and Sunnyvale, accomplishes this in two ways:

- Garbage coming from homes and businesses is screened for recyclable materials that were not pulled out as part of curbside or commercial recycling efforts. Even with enthusiastic participation in residential and commercial recycling programs there remains in the trash a sizable amount of recyclable materials that can be recovered through the SMaRT Station operation.
- Garbage that is not recyclable is compacted and consolidated in large transfer trailers before being trucked to the Kirby Canyon Landfill 27 miles away in south San Jose. While 175 trucks make deliveries to the SMaRT Station each day, only 40 trucks make the trek to the landfill.

Contact the Sunnyvale Recycling Program at (408) 730-7262 with your questions or to request a SMaRT Station brochure or annual report.